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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/716,346	11/18/2003	Ming Zheng	CL2221USNA	7632

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E I DU PONT DE NEMOURS AND COMPANY
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WILMINGTON, DE 19805

EXAMINER

FORMAN, BETTY J

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1634

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	01/30/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/716,346

Applicant(s)

ZHENG ET AL.

Examiner

BJ Forman

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 November 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24 and 27 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-20 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 21-24 and 27 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 21 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

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DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 14 November 2006 has been entered.

Status of the Claims

2. This action is in response to papers filed 14 November 2006 in which claim 21 was amended and claims 25-26 were canceled. The amendments have been thoroughly reviewed and entered.

The previous rejections in the Office Action dated 5 June 2006 under 35 U.S.C. 112, first and second paragraph are withdrawn in view of the amendments. The previous rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) and obviousness-type double patenting are maintained. Applicant's arguments have been thoroughly reviewed and are discussed below. New grounds for rejection are discussed.

Claims 21-24 and 27 are under prosecution.

Claim Objections

3. Claim 21 is objected to because of the following informalities: the claim has two periods "." at the end of the claim.

Appropriate correction is required.

35 U.S.C. 112: Second Paragraph

4. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

5. Claims 21-24, 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 21-24 and 27 are indefinite in Claim 21 for the recitation “consisting essentially of”. The recitation is indefinite because it defines the nucleic acid-nanotube complex as having additional elements. However, it is unclear what additional elements are encompassed by the recitation. The recitation also appears to exclude some elements from the complex previously included by the term “comprising”. However, it is unclear what elements are excluded. Furthermore, the specification provides no guidance regarding the interpretation of the phrase “consisting essentially of” nor does the specification provide a definition of the meets and bounds of a complex consisting essentially of a single walled nanotube bound to a single stranded nucleic acid.

Absent a clear definition of the phrase, for purposes of examination the phrase “consisting essentially of” is interpreted as “comprising”.

For the purposes of searching for and applying prior art under 35 U.S.C. 102 and 103, absent a clear indication in the specification or claims of what the basic and novel characteristics actually are, “consisting essentially of” will be construed as equivalent to “comprising.” See, e.g., PPG, 156 F.3d at 1355, 48 USPQ2d at 1355 (“PPG could have defined the scope of the phrase consisting essentially of for purposes of its patent by making clear in its specification what it regarded as constituting a material change in the basic and novel characteristics of the invention.”). MPEM § 2111.03

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 21-24 and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Guo et al (Advanced Materials, 1998, 10(9): 701-703) in view of O'Connell et al (Chemical Physics Letters, 2001, 342: 265-271).

Regarding Claim 21, Guo et al discloses a complex comprising a carbon nanotube bound to a nucleic acid molecule by non-covalent means (page 701, last paragraph). Guo et al are silent regarding the nanotube structure being single walled or multiwalled.

However, dispersed and unfunctionalized single-walled nanotubes (SWNT) were well known in the art at the time the claimed invention was made as taught by O'Connell et al. O'Connell et al teach a similar complex comprising SWNT and a non-covalently associated linear polymer (Abstract). O'Connell et al further teach that SWNT have "remarkable mechanical and electrical properties" and the dispersion of the SWNT allows the complexes to be reliably manipulated in solution phase techniques e.g. as chemical reagents (page 265, paragraphs 1-2). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the claimed invention was made to apply the dispersion of SWNT of O'Connell et al to the nanotube complex of Guo et al for the expected benefit of reliable manipulation of nanotube-nucleic acid complexes in solution phase assays as desired in the art (O'Connell, page 265).

Regarding Claim 22, Guo et al disclose the complex wherein the nucleic acid is DNA (page 701, last paragraph, lines 6-10).

Regarding Claim 23, Guo et al disclose the complex wherein the nucleic acid is substantially isolated from nature (page 701, last paragraph, lines 6-10).

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Regarding Claim 24, Guo et al disclose the complex wherein the nucleic acid is between 10 and 1000 bases (page 701, last paragraph, lines 6-10).

Regarding Claim 27, Guo et al disclose the complex wherein the nucleic acid is metallized i.e. platinated (page 701, last paragraph, lines 6-10).

8. Claims 21-24 and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tsang et al (Angew, Chem. Int. 1997, 36 (20): 2198-2200) in view of O'Connell et al (Chemical Physics Letters, 2001, 342: 265-271).

Regarding Claim 21, Tsang et al discloses a complex comprising a carbon nanotube bound to a nucleic acid molecule by non-covalent means i.e. adsorbed DNA (page 2199 and Fig. 3). Tsang et al are silent regarding the nanotube structure being single walled.

However, single-walled nanotubes (SWNT) were well known and preferred in the art at the time the claimed invention was made as taught by O'Connell et al. O'Connell et al teach a similar complex comprising SWNT and a non-covalently associated linear polymer (Abstract). O'Connell et al further teach that SWNT have "remarkable mechanical and electrical properties" and the dispersion of the SWNT allows the complexes to be reliably manipulated in solution phase techniques e.g. as chemical reagents (page 265, paragraphs 1-2). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the claimed invention was made to apply the dispersion of SWNT of O'Connell et al to the nanotube complex of Tsang et al for the expected benefit of reliable manipulation of nanotube-nucleic acid complexes in solution phase assays as desired in the art (O'Connell, page 265).

Regarding Claim 22, Tsang et al disclose the complex wherein the nucleic acid is DNA (page 2198, right column).

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Regarding Claim 23, Tsang et al disclose the complex wherein the nucleic acid is substantially isolated from nature (page 2198, right column).

Regarding Claim 24, Tsang et al disclose the complex wherein the nucleic acid is between 10 and 1000 bases (page 2198, right column, line 2).

Regarding Claim 27, Tsang et al disclose the complex wherein the nucleic acid is metallized i.e. platinated (page 2198, right column).

9. Claims 21-24, 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Massey et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,866,434, issued 2 February 1999) in view of O'Connell et al (Chemical Physics Letters, 2001, 342: 265-271).

Regarding Claim 21, Massey et al discloses a dispersed (Example 6, Column 45) complex comprising a carbon nanotube bound to a nucleic acid molecule by non-covalent means i.e. biotinylated DNA is bound avidin adsorbed onto the nanotube (Column 40, lines 41-50). Massey et al are silent regarding the nanotube structure being single walled.

However, single-walled and unfunctionalized nanotubes (SWNT) were well known and preferred in the art at the time the claimed invention was made as taught by O'Connell et al. O'Connell et al teach a similar complex comprising SWNT and a non-covalently associated linear polymer (Abstract). O'Connell et al further teach that SWNT have "remarkable mechanical and electrical properties" and the dispersion of the SWNT allows the complexes to be reliably manipulated in solution phase techniques e.g. as chemical reagents (page 265, paragraphs 1-2). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the claimed invention was made to apply the dispersion of SWNT of O'Connell et al to the nanotube complex of Massey et al for the expected benefit of reliable manipulation of nanotube-nucleic acid complexes in solution phase assays as desired in the art (O'Connell, page 265).

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Regarding Claim 22, Massey et al disclose the complex wherein the nucleic acid is DNA (Column 40, line 47).

Regarding Claim 23, Massey et al disclose the complex wherein the nucleic acid is substantially isolated from nature (Column 40, lines 41-50).

Regarding Claim 24, Massey et al disclose the complex wherein the nucleic acid is between 10 and 1000 bases (Example 6, Column 45, lines 18-20 and Fig. 4).

Regarding Claim 27, Massey et al disclose the complex wherein the nucleic acid is metallized i.e. via hybridization with $\text{Ru}(\text{bpy})_3^{2+}$ tag (Column 40, lines 47-50; Example 6, Column 45, lines 18-20; and Fig. 4).

Response to Arguments

10. Applicant asserts that the claims as amended include the closed transitional phrase "consisting essentially of" and therefore are not encompassed by the double-stranded nucleic acids taught in the cited prior art. The argument has been considered but is not found persuasive because, as stated above, the MPEP § 2111.03 states that absent a definition in the specification for the phrase "consisting essentially of", the phrase is interpreted as "comprising". As stated in the Advisory Action of 11 July 2006, open claim language "comprising" encompasses the second strand of the double stranded nucleic acids taught in the cited prior art.

Double Patenting

11. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground

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provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

12. Claims 21-23 and 27 are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 14 and 19 of copending Application No. 10/716,347. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because both sets of claims are drawn to carbon nanotube-nucleic acid complexes and differ only in the '347 complexes are defined by the process of making. However, both claim sets define the same product as defined by their structures. Therefore, the products are not patentably distinct.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Response to Applicant

13. Applicant states that the '347 claims are drawn to a population of complexes while the instant claims are drawn to single complex. Applicant re-asserts that the '347 complexes are patentably distinct from those instantly claimed because the '347 claims are written in product-by-process form. The argument has been considered but is not found persuasive because the courts have stated that "even though product-by-process claims are limited by and defined by the process, determination of patentability is based on the product itself. The patentability of a product does not depend on its method of production. If the product in the product-by-process claim is the same as or obvious from a product of the prior art, the claim is unpatentable even though the prior product was made by a different process." In re Thorpe, 777 F.2d 695, 698, 227 USPQ 964, 966 (Fed. Cir. 1985) see MPEP 2113.

The rejection is maintained.

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Conclusion

14. No claim is allowed.

15. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to BJ Forman whose telephone number is (571) 272-0741. The examiner can normally be reached on 6:00 TO 3:30.

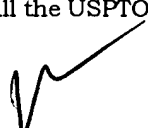
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ram Shukla can be reached on (571) 272-0735. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to (571) 272-0547.

Patent applicants with problems or questions regarding electronic images that can be viewed in the Patent Application Information Retrieval system (PAIR) can now contact the USPTO's Patent Electronic Business Center (Patent EBC) for assistance. Representatives are available to answer your questions daily from 6 am to midnight (EST). The toll free number is (866) 217-9197. When calling please have your application serial or patent number, the type of document you are having an image problem with, the number of pages and the specific nature of the problem. The Patent Electronic Business Center will notify applicants of the resolution of the problem within 5-7 business days. Applicants can also check PAIR to confirm that the problem has been corrected. The USPTO's Patent Electronic Business Center is a complete service center supporting all patent business on the Internet. The USPTO's PAIR system provides Internet-based access to patent application status and history information. It also enables applicants to view the scanned images of their own application file folder(s) as well as general patent information available to the public.

For all other customer support, please call the USPTO Call Center (UCC) at 800-786-9199.



BJ Forman, Ph.D.
Primary Examiner
Art Unit: 1634
January 23, 2007